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Two Congressmen 'Inspect' San Clemente

San Clemente

Two members of the House Appropriations Committee spent more than three hours yesterday inspecting the Western White House at San Clemente and said afterward that government expenditures—for the most part—were justified."

In a related action, the Orange county grand jury announced that it did not intend to pursue any investigation into the tax assessments placed on the estate.

Representatives Edward R. Roybal (Dem-Calif.) and Jack Edwards (Rep-Ala.) told newsmen after the tour that, at the President's invitation, they were aken through all the facilities, including the office complex, all of the grounds of Mr. Nixon's private residence and many of the rooms inside including his office and bedroom.

FIRST

The tour is believed to be the first inspection of government-financed facilities there since the controversy over improvement costs developed several monhts ago.

"My general impression is that the money which was spent for security was money well spent," Roybal said.

He added, in response to a question, that money used for landscaping around the residence "was justified," a term he also used in regard to a bulletproof windscreen around the swimming pool.

A $5000 item for furniture for the President's den alsowas wupported by Roybal, who said, "I have no objection — all employees of the government should have the facilities to work."

But Roybal also noted instances of what he called "overkill," such as money spent for esthetics. He also raised the question, "how much protection is enough?" in regard to security expenditures.

ECHO

Edwards echoed Roybal's assessment of the reported $2.4 million spent on the San Clemente residence.

The grand jury's statement left the issue squarely up to the members of the Orange county Assessment Appeals Board which was asked last week by the California State Board of Equilization to look into the assessment, now placed at $1.37 million.

The request came by unanimous vote of the four Democratic members of the state board who said they took the action to "get it off our backs."

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